

Brush Lifting at Benning

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FORT BENNING, the Army's large military reservation in western Georgia, is the home of the Infantry School Hunt, organized in 1923. The reservation's one hundred thousand acres, constantly patrolled by range-guards, has long been a sanctuary of the horseman's game—fox, bobcat, and wild pig.

With such a vast area, and with a well-planned conservation program, game is never exhausted. It has more than doubled during the past two years.

As fox and bobcat inhabit no particular portion of the reservation, hunts are often conducted over stretches distant from the stables. The horses are brought to the area by the stable personnel, while the hunter motors out in his car. The hounds arrive in a specially improvised truck. Coffee and doughnuts are served at 5:45, the field mounts promptly at 6:00, and the Huntsman leads out to the chase. Sometimes a brush is lifted within the hour, but at others an eager pack will run sweet until well into the afternoon, and then be foxed. Reynard is nobody's fool.

Red fox gives the hardest chase. Small, sly, and cunning, these rascals tax the hounds' endurance and the Huntsman's skill. Normally they dwell on the crests and love the broad open spaces, but when pursued they break for the swamps and the tall uncut. Often, to lose their scent when it is rich in the nostrils of the lead hounds, they will bound from a thicket and run through the entire Field to the accompaniment of whinnying horses and hallooing hunters. Or when pressed close in to the Post they take to the paved roads of the residence sections, or bound across the golf courses, seeming to know that the

General has forbidden horses on the fairways. And many a hunter will tell of having seen a red fox climb a tree (while many another will scoff).

The gray fox is heavier and has greater endurance, but lacks the cunning of his red brethren. Nonetheless, he will lead hounds and Field a merry round before his brush is lifted. Swimming streams, backtracking, and cutting circuitous routes through planted fields, he is no pick-up, but if the hunters have the dogged determination of the hounds, they usually fetch in a kill—after a five- or six-hour run.

Bobcats are treacherous. They seem to realize that tree climbing means their doom, and they never resort to this false expedient when pushed by the pack. Like the red fox, they turn to the swamps and the hard going. Cornered time after time, a cat will claw his way through the pack and make an escape, only to be tracked down to a new rendezvous. Often they prove the stronger, wearing down the hounds through both the vicissitudes of the chase and the frequent combats. A twenty-five pound bob always takes his toll in hound flesh whether caught or lost. Their claws are razor-edged scimitars ready to tear a gaping hole in any hide that ventures within stroke. The hounds have only the dint of numbers in their favor.

Wild-pig hunts are usually held in the afternoons. Several low areas on the reservation abound in this game, and the hunt seldom returns empty-handed, though the Field always gets a good workout. Most of the pigs are small, fat, black-and-white little devils completely at the mercy of the hounds once they are discovered. The Huntsman stays close to his pack to effect a rescue before a pig

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falls a casualty to sharp canine teeth. But occasionally a large tusker is routed, and the decks are cleared. If a hapless hound is a little too slow the boar's tusks rip him from bark to back. If crowded, sometimes a tusker will charge the Field, cutting horses from under their frightened riders. One of the doughtiest "hounds" in the pack is a pit bull dog.

Years ago when the Hunt was first organized the care of a few scraggly mutts was entrusted to Sergeant Thomas Tweed, who had a time in those early days to keep the foxes from eating the hounds. Today Sergeant Tweed still is Huntsman, but he has a fine blooded pack of sixty noses. Over this period of years hounds from all parts of the country have been tried. Purchases were made in Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, and California, and out of the many breeds that have hunted in the pack from year to year Sergeant Tweed chose four as being particularly adapted to the country and the game. Trigg, July, Black-and-tan, and Walker have proved themselves on

the chase and in the kennels. These four strains are now bred at the School, but experimentation still continues by annual outside purchases.

Available for hunting are one hundred and seventy mounts at the Infantry School Stables. Many of the horses are Thoroughbreds and winners of distinction in the horse shows and hunter trials held annually at Benning.

On alternate Sundays drag hunts are held with a special pack of fleet-footed hounds leading a fast pace over the vagaries of a specially prepared six-mile course of rolling terrain, steep grades, ditches, and other obstacles that give the high-schooler a brisk workout. Spills are frequent but rarely serious, save that a policing and a runaway means the rider returns home on foot.

The drag hunt is divided into three echelons—those who follow the Master at a brisk, cross-country gait, taking the course as they find it; those who follow at a canter but do not choose to negotiate the jumps; and those who, at a slow



PART OF THE FIELD AND THE "MIXED-BAG" PACK. FORDING A STREAM

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trot, take an inner course, stopping at vantage points along the way to watch the thrilling rides of the first echelon. Oftimes a motorcade of nonriders parallels the course by automobile and joins the hunters for breakfast when the chase is completed. At the end of the course the hounds are rewarded with a litter of spare ribs for their oft-repeated pursuit of the

aniseed-scented drag.

Annually, a few weeks prior to the opening hunt in October, the new Master of Fox Hounds is announced together with his coterie of Whips. Proud beat the hearts of those selected few, the envy of all hunters, whose skill in the saddle has won them the distinction of appearing in "pink."

Centennial of Ohio's 135th Field Artillery

THE year 1939 marks the 100th Anniversary of the 135th Field Artillery, National Guard of the United States. Various events are taking place to commemorate it. The Association of The Cleveland Light Artillery already having held its primary Centennial luncheon on February 25th at the Army & Navy Club in Cleveland. This was attended by approximately 100 artillerymen of Cleveland, and arrangements are being made by the association for further commemoration of the event.

The entire regiment will visit Cleveland June 10-11, at which time a night military parade will take place, the escort consisting of all of the other National Guard units of Cleveland and surrounding territory. The regiment will conduct a church parade and church service on Sunday, June 11th at Trinity Cathedral in Cleveland.

Invitations to other military organizations are to be issued by the regiment, as it is felt that there may be many who will desire to assist the 135th Field Artillery in perpetuating traditions of the service.

A history of the regiment was compiled and edited by Capt. Richard L. McNelly, a member of the Regimental Headquarters, and published in 1936. From this historical

account is learned an account of the origin and development of the Regiment. Its history has been made official by an indorsement dated May 22, 1933 to a War Department Order, said indorsement emanating from the Historical Section of the Army War College.

The 135th Field Artillery Regiment had its birth in what was known as the Cleveland Light Artillery. In 1839 a gun squad was formed within the Cleveland Grays, a military company of the early days. This was the beginning of what is now the full regiment, and the date to which the 135th FA traces its inception.

In 1845 the gun squad seceded from the Grays, forming a separate organization known as the Cleveland Light Artillery.

During the period 1845 to 1860, the original battery in Cleveland had been the guiding spirit for an organization which was to gain the proportions of a regiment and to be known as "1st Regiment, Ohio Light Artillery."

Companies A, B, D, and E, all from Cleveland, Company C from Brooklyn, which was then a separate city, and Company F of Geneva, Ohio, had been organized into a regiment and as of August 1st, 1860, designated as "1st Regiment of Light Artillery of Ohio Volunteer Militia." Later these units were redesignated "The 1st Regiment of